Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation
Water Resources Division
Water Rights Bureau

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

For Routine Actions with Limited Environmental Impact

Part I. Proposed Action Description

1. Applicant/Contact name and address:

Big Rose Colony
PO Box 905
Shelby, MT 59474

2. Type of action: Application for Permit for Water Right No. 41P-30150125

3. Water source name: Tributary area of Marias River - Collected Stormwater

4. Location affected by project: This proposed the use of stormwater and runoff in Section 19, T33N, R2W, Toole County.

Figure 1: Map in Section 19, Township 33 North, Range 2 West, Toole County for Permit Application 41P-30150125 Big Rose Colony.

5. Narrative summary of the proposed project, purpose, action to be taken, and benefits:

The DNRC shall issue a permit authorization if an applicant proves the criteria in 85-2-402 MCA are met. Big Rose Colony proposes to use stormwater / runoff for garden and pig barn washing uses. The applicant proposes their period of diversion year-round and period of use from 5/15 – 10/15 by piping their runoff water from their roofs and yard into a pond.

6. Agencies consulted during preparation of the Environmental Assessment:

Natural Heritage Program, Natural Resources Conservation Service Soils Data Website, Department of Environmental Quality, National Wetlands Inventory Website, and the Natural Resources Information System, the Department of Fish, Wildlife, & Parks.

Part II. Environmental Review
Environmental Impact Checklist:

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

WATER QUANTITY, QUALITY AND DISTRIBUTION

Water quantity - The Tributary of Marias River has been identified as chronically or periodically dewatered by the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, & Parks.

Determination: Impact to water quantity is expected.

Water quality - The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) does list the Tributary of Marias River as water quality impaired or threatened.

DEQ identifies the Marias River as not fully supporting aquatic life, the rest has been unassessed. The causes of this are due to alteration in stream-side vegetative covers, physical substrate habitat alterations, and salinity. The source of these named issues is due to agriculture. The proposed project will possibly adversely affect water quality. The purpose of the project is to obtain stormwater from the for garden and washing pig barn purposes. This will cause adverse effect the surrounding watersheds as the pig barn washing and gardening could introduce contaminates into the waterways and groundwater nearby.

Determination: Impact to Tributary of Marias River expected.

Groundwater - The project does not involve groundwater.

Determination: Assessment is not applicable.

DIVERSION WORKS

Water runoff from building roofs and yard areas near and between buildings will drain through underground PVC pipes to the storage pond. Pipe diameters will be sized for expected flow rates with smaller branch pipes leading to larger pipes draining into the pond. Additionally, an overflow discharge pipe of approximately 18-inch diameter is included in the pond design and the pond will have a minimum of 2-feet freeboard above the overflow elevation. The runoff would be stored in a constructed impoundment of up to approximately 8 million gallons, measuring up to approximately 200 by 600 feet at the bottom, about 8 feet deep, and 3:1 horizontal to vertical side slopes. Excavated soil would be used to form a berm around the perimeter. It will be lined with HDPE or bentonite to limit percolation. All pumps used for this project will be electric centrifugal pumps with manual start and timed, manual, or water low level automatic off functions. A submersible pump will be used to pump water from the pond to use points.

Determination: No significant impact.

UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

Endangered and threatened species

Below is a list of animal species of concern found in T33N, R2W, Toole County. There were no plant species of concern identified. The project is not located in Sage Grouse habitat. All species found in the area of interest are listed as G3 and G4. The following definitions are taken from the Montana Natural Heritage Program (MNHP). The G3 category defines a species as "Potentially at risk because of limited and/or declining numbers, range and/or habitat, even though it may be abundant in some areas." The G4 category defines a species as "Apparently secure, though it may be quite rare in parts of its range, and/or suspected to be declining." The Grizzly Bear, Chestnut-collared Longspur, Loggerhead Shrike, and the Ferruginous Hawk should not be impacted by the project. The Little Brown Myotis could be affected by this project. This species commonly forages over water, and this project could potentially effect water quality. The management plan for these species consists of reintroduction, habitat rehabilitation, human interaction maintenance, and research. This project will affect the Little Brown Myotis, but none of the other species listed above.

Species of Concern
5 Species
Filtered by the following criteria:
Township = 033N002W (based on mapped Species Occurrences)

MAMMALS (MAMMALIA) — *2 SPECIES* — *TOWNSHIP = 033N002W (based on mapped Species Occurrences)*

SCIENTIFIC NAME / COMMON NAME / TAXA SORT	FAMILY (SCIENTIFIC) / FAMILY (COMMON)	GLOBAL RANK	STATE RANK	USFWS	USFS	BLM	FWP SWAP	% OF GLOBAL BREEDING RANGE IN MT	% OF MT THAT IS BREEDING RANGE	HABITAT
Myotis lucifugus Little Brown Myotis	*Vespertilionidae* Bats	G3G4	S3				SGCN3	3%	100%	Generalist
		Species Occurrences verified in these Counties: Beaverhead, Big Horn, Blaine, Broadwater, Carbon, Carter, Cascade, Chouteau, Custer, Daniels, Dawson, Deer Lodge, Fallon, Fergus, Flathead, Gallatin, Garfield, Glacier, Golden Valley, Granite, Hill, Jefferson, Judith Basin, Lake, Lewis and Clark, Lincoln, Madison, Mccone, Meagher, Mineral, Missoula, Musselshell, Park, Petroleum, Phillips, Pondera, Powder River, Powell, Prairie, Ravalli, Richland, Roosevelt, Rosebud, Sanders, Sheridan, Silver Bow, Stillwater, Sweet Grass, Teton, Toole, Treasure, Valley, Wheatland, Wibaux, Yellowstone							
		State Rank Reason: Species is common and widespread, but under significant threat of catastrophic declines due to White-Nose Syndrome, a fungal disease responsible for the collapse of populations of this species in the eastern US.								
Ursus arctos Grizzly Bear	*Ursidae* Bears	G4	S2S3	PS: LT; XN		THREATENED	SGCN2-3	1%	22%	Conifer forest
		Species Occurrences verified in these Counties: Beaverhead, Broadwater, Carbon, Cascade, Chouteau, Deer Lodge, Fergus, Flathead, Gallatin, Glacier, Granite, Hill, Jefferson, Judith Basin, Lake, Lewis and Clark, Liberty, Lincoln, Madison, Meagher, Mineral, Missoula, Park, Pondera, Powell, Ravalli, Sanders, Silver Bow, Stillwater, Sweet Grass, Teton, Toole, Wheatland, Yellowstone								

BIRDS (AVES) — *3 SPECIES* — *TOWNSHIP = 033N002W (based on mapped Species Occurrences)*

SCIENTIFIC NAME / COMMON NAME / TAXA SORT	FAMILY (SCIENTIFIC) / FAMILY (COMMON)	GLOBAL RANK	STATE RANK	USFWS	USFS	BLM	FWP SWAP	% OF GLOBAL BREEDING RANGE IN MT	% OF MT THAT IS BREEDING RANGE	HABITAT
Buteo regalis Ferruginous Hawk	*Accipitridae* Hawks / Kites / Eagles	G4	S3B	MBTA; BCC17		SENSITIVE	SGCN3	11%	95%	Sagebrush grassland
		Species Occurrences verified in these Counties: Beaverhead, Blaine, Broadwater, Carter, Cascade, Chouteau, Custer, Daniels, Dawson, Deer Lodge, Fallon, Fergus, Gallatin, Garfield, Glacier, Golden Valley, Hill, Jefferson, Judith Basin, Lewis and Clark, Liberty, Madison, Mccone, Meagher, Musselshell, Park, Petroleum, Phillips, Pondera, Powder River, Powell, Prairie, Roosevelt, Rosebud, Sheridan, Stillwater, Teton, Toole, Valley, Wheatland, Wibaux, Yellowstone								
Calcarius ornatus Chestnut-collared Longspur	*Calcariidae* Longspurs and Snow Buntings	G5	S2B	MBTA; BCC11; BCC17		SENSITIVE	SGCN2	22%	67%	Grasslands
		Species Occurrences verified in these Counties: Big Horn, Blaine, Carbon, Carter, Cascade, Chouteau, Custer, Daniels, Dawson, Fallon, Fergus, Garfield, Glacier, Golden Valley, Hill, Judith Basin, Lewis and Clark, Liberty, Mccone, Musselshell, Petroleum, Phillips, Powder River, Prairie, Richland, Roosevelt, Rosebud, Sheridan, Stillwater, Sweet Grass, Teton, Toole, Valley, Wheatland, Wibaux, Yellowstone								
		State Rank Reason: Species has a negative short-term population trend and faces threats from loss of native prairie grassland habitats and altered frequency, intensity, and spatial distribution of grazing and fire regimes it is dependent on.								
Lanius ludovicianus Loggerhead Shrike	*Laniidae* Shrikes	G4	S3B	MBTA		SENSITIVE	SGCN3	4%	100%	Shrubland
		Species Occurrences verified in these Counties: Beaverhead, Big Horn, Blaine, Broadwater, Carbon, Carter, Cascade, Chouteau, Custer, Daniels, Dawson, Fallon, Fergus, Gallatin, Garfield, Glacier, Golden Valley, Hill, Jefferson, Liberty, Madison, Mccone, Meagher, Musselshell, Petroleum, Phillips, Pondera, Powder River, Prairie, Richland, Roosevelt, Rosebud, Sheridan, Stillwater, Sweet Grass, Teton, Toole, Valley, Wheatland, Wibaux, Yellowstone								

Figure 2: Animal Species of Concern Located in T33N, R2W, Toole County.

Determination: Impact to the Little Brown Myotis, is expected.

Wetlands – The project does not involve wetlands.

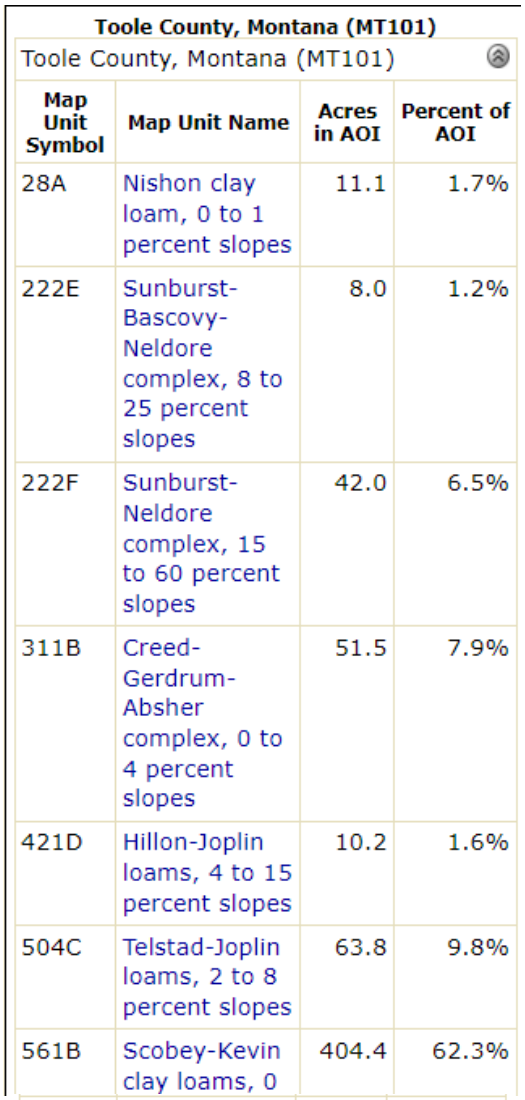
Determination: Assessment is not applicable.

Ponds - The project does not involve ponds.

Determination: Assessment is not applicable.

GEOLOGY/SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Web Soil Survey was utilized to assess the project area's soils. The soil map below depicts the general project area, and the table provides soil unit information.



Toole County, Montana (MT101)

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Map Unit Symbol	Map Unit Name	Acres in AOI	Percent of AOI
28A	Nishon clay loam, 0 to 1 percent slopes	11.1	1.7%
222E	Sunburst-Bascovy-Neldore complex, 8 to 25 percent slopes	8.0	1.2%
222F	Sunburst-Neldore complex, 15 to 60 percent slopes	42.0	6.5%
311B	Creed-Gerdrum-Absher complex, 0 to 4 percent slopes	51.5	7.9%
421D	Hillon-Joplin loams, 4 to 15 percent slopes	10.2	1.6%
504C	Telstad-Joplin loams, 2 to 8 percent slopes	63.8	9.8%
561B	Scobey-Kevin clay loams, 0	404.4	62.3%
561C	Scobey-Kevin clay loams, 2 to 8 percent slopes	56.6	8.7%
971C	Bascovy-Neldore clays, 2 to 8 percent slopes	1.9	0.3%
Totals for Area of Interest		**649.5**	**100.0%**

Figure 3: Web Soil Survey of Soil Types in Section 19, T33N, R2W, Toole County.

Figure 4: Map of Web Soil Survey Soil Types in Section 19, T33N, R2W, Toole County.

Determination: No significant impact.

VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY/NOXIOUS WEEDS - Any impacts to existing vegetation will be within the range of current disturbances due to current land use practices. Noxious weeds are not expected to be established or spread due to the proposed project.

Determination: No significant impact.

AIR QUALITY - The project does not involve air quality.

Determination: Assessment is not applicable.

HISTORICAL AND ARCHEOLOGICAL SITES - The project does not involve historical and archeological sites.

Determination: Assessment is not applicable.

DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AND ENERGY – There are no other environmental issues that need to be addressed.

Determination: No additional environmental impacts were identified.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS - No local environmental plans and goals were identified.

Determination: No impact to local environmental plans and goals is expected.

ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES - No recreational or wilderness activities were identified.

Determination: No impact to recreational and wilderness activities is expected.

HUMAN HEALTH - No human health issues were identified.

Determination: No impact to human health is expected.

PRIVATE PROPERTY - *Assess whether there are any government regulatory impacts on private property rights.*
*Yes___ No_ **X** _ If yes, analyze any alternatives considered that could reduce, minimize, or eliminate the regulation of private property rights*.

Determination: No impact to private property rights.

OTHER HUMAN ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES - *For routine actions of limited environmental impact, the following may be addressed in a checklist fashion.*

Impacts on:

(a) *Cultural uniqueness and diversity?* No impact.

(b) *Local and state tax base and tax revenues?* No impact.

(c) *Existing land uses?* No impact.

(d) *Quantity and distribution of employment?* No impact.

(e) *Distribution and density of population and housing?* No impact.

(f) *Demands for government services?* No impact.

(g) *Industrial and commercial activity?* No impact.

(h) *Utilities?* No impact.

(i) *Transportation?* No impact.

(j) *Safety?* No impact.

(k) *Other appropriate social and economic circumstances?* No impact.

2. ***Secondary and cumulative impacts on the physical environment and human population:***

Secondary Impacts No secondary impacts were identified.

Cumulative Impacts No cumulative impacts were identified.

3. ***Describe any mitigation/stipulation measures:*** No mitigation or stipulation measures exist at this moment

Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives to the proposed action, including the no action alternative, if an alternative is reasonably available and prudent to consider:

No action alternative: The Applicant would not be able to develop the project as proposed.

4.

PART III. Conclusion

1. ***Preferred Alternative*** Proposed action.

2 ***Comments and Responses*** None to date.

3. ***Finding:***
*Yes___ No_**X**_Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this EA, is an EIS required?*

If an EIS is not required, explain <u>why</u> the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for this proposed action:

An EA is the appropriate level of assessment for the proposed action because little to no impacts have been identified in the EA.

Name of person(s) responsible for preparation of EA:

Name: Megan Blauwkamp
Title: Water Resources Specialist
Date: 3/4/2022